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## Navy to replace Telemetry Range Support Aircraft

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**NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md.** – The Tactical Airlift Program Office (PMA-207) awarded a contract Mar. 18 to purchase one Gulfstream G550 aircraft with Airborne Early Warning (AEW) structural mold line modifications and mission systems provisions.

Part of a two-phased acquisition strategy, the G550 will replace the NP-3D Orion aircraft used as Telemetry Range Support Aircraft (TRSA) at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division's Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 30, Point Mugu, California.

The NP-3D aircraft requires replacement due to significant service life, sustainment challenges and obsolescence of the telemetry system.

The first phase of the strategy purchases a commercial derivative G550 with a Federal Aviation Administration Type Certificate.

"The Gulfstream G550 meets capability requirements and is cost effective," said Doug Dawson, PMA-207 program manager.

Post production line, the aircraft moves to the Gulfstream "Monster Garage" where the necessary Supplemental Type Certificates to complete the AEW modifications are incorporated.

According to Tactical Airlift program office, the AEW modifications include enlarged nose, tail and side fairings; cable conduits and channels; interior layout; and the addition of a liquid cooling system, all in preparation for the incorporation of telemetry and mission systems.

The second phase of the strategy provides the G550 AEW aircraft as government-furnished property to a company chosen through a full and open competition. This company will develop a tri-band telemetry system and procure and integrate the telemetry system along with additional mission equipment into the G550 AEW airframe.

The TRSA performs airborne data retrieval functions. During a typical telemetry mission, the aircraft flies near the system under test and collects data through the telemetry antennae. The collected data is recorded, accessed and relayed back to the Sea Test Range for further analysis.

The second phase request for proposal is due to be released fall of 2016.